The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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Not in Vain.

"I HAVE labored in vain," a teacher said,
And her brow was marked by care;
"I have labored in vain." She bowed her head,
And bitter and sad were the tears she shed
In that moment of dark despair.

"I am weary and worn, and my hands are weak,
And my courage is well-nigh gone;
For none give heed to the words I speak,
And in vain for a promise of fruit I seek,
Where the seed of the Word is sown."

And again with a sorrowing heart she wept,
For her spirit with grief was stirred;
Till the night grew dark, and at last she slept,
And a silent calm o'er her spirit crept,
And a whisper of "peace" was heard.

And she thought in her dreams that the soul took flight
To a blessed and bright abode;
She saw a throne of dazzling light,
And harps were ringing and robes were white,
Made white in a Saviour's blood.

And she saw such a countless throng around
As she never had seen before—
Their brows with jewels of light were crowned,
And sorrow and sighing no place had found,
For the troubles of time were o'er.

Then a white-robed maiden came forth and said,
"Joy! joy! for thy trials are past!
I am *one* that thy gentle words have led
In the narrow pathway of life to tread—
I welcome thee home at last!"

And the teacher gazed on the maiden's face;
She had seen that face on earth,
When with anxious heart, in het wonted place,
She had told her charge of a Saviour's grace,
And their need of a second birth.

Then the teacher smiled, and an angel said,
"Go forth to thy work again;
It is not in vain that the seed is shed;
If only *one* soul to the cross is led,
Thy labor is not in vain."

And at last she woke, and her knee she bent
In grateful, child-like prayer—
And she prayed till an answer of peace was sent,
And faith and hope as a rainbow bent,
O'er the clouds of her earthly care.

And she rose in joy, and her eye was bright,
And her sorrow and grief had fled—
And her soul was calm, and her heart was light,
For her hands were strong in her Saviour's might,
As forth to her work she sped.

Then rise, fellow-teacher, to labor go!
Wide scatter the precious grain—
Though the fruit may never be seen below,
Be sure that the seed of the Word shall grow;
Toil on in faith, and thou soon shalt know
"Thy labor is not in vain!"

Sunday School World.

For the Myrtle.

Talks about the Birds.

DURING the Summer months, while the young folks are much out of doors, and many of them can visit the fields and woods, and others who live in the cities can hear the voices of birds from the trees in the gardens or parks and commons, or at the street-sides, I have thought that the young readers of the MYRTLE and I might enjoy ourselves now and then in a pleasant talk about the birds. For these are among the agreeable and instructive handiwork of the great Being who called forth all this life which we see everywhere around us, and who has made everything beautiful in its season. How we ought to thank Him for the birds! They are such an addition to our enjoyment, and to those charming earth-scenes in the midst of which we dwell.

We read about birds in the Bible. The people who lived when that Book was written took note of them, and enjoyed them. Jesus alluded

to them as "the fowls of the air," who were fed by our Heavenly Father, and who had their nests to inhabit, while he had not where to lay his head. But it is not about the birds of the Bible-times or of Bible-lands particularly that I wish to speak. We can make out a larger catalogue if we look after our own American birds, than we shall find even in that most excellent book, the Bible.

There are about four hundred different kinds of birds in the United States, and most of them may be found in the eastern part of New England. And yet how small a number of them are known to the people who dwell here, and how few are known by their names! Of these few let us note a portion as we may be able to find them.

One of the first birds whose notes we hear in the spring is the Blue-bird, a happy little fellow, full of his cheery warbling, saying to us, "The winter is going, gone, and I bring you warm breezes and wild flowers!" His song is often mistaken for that of the Robin; but it is a different one, sweet indeed, but not so prolonged and full as Robin's. Passing through a valley not far from the banks ot the Merrimack this spring, just at sunset, I found myself in the midst of a grand concert of Blue-birds. They were on a high musical "train," and were singing the day out most melodiously.

One of the next birds that the late Spring and summer time brings to us, is the swallow. Every boy and girl knows the swallow. He is an English as well as an American bird. The Englsh poet, Cunningham, sings of him, in his poem on "Morning,"

> "From the low-roofed cottage ridge,
> See the chattering swallow spring;
> Darting through the one-arched bridge,
> Quick he dips his dappled wing."

Don't he "dart" when on the wing! Such an easy, independent sailor through the air is scarcely to be found among all the feathered tribes. His feet are not made for much walking, so he keeps his wings moving, now upward, now downward, then away, and returning again towards you, almost striking you in his swift course, yet very sure to keep out of your way. Soon he is lost to your sight. They tell strange stories about the flight of the swallow. I know not how true some of them are. It has been calculated how far a swallow might fly in ten years, one mile in a minute, for ten hours each day,—2,190,000 miles! Can you believe it? can you deny it?

Swallows do not choose to live far away from the dwellings of men. The Indians of our country were always attached to the swallow and martin, and some of them to this day, we believe, hung up gourd-shells on the trees, inviting them to come and build their nests there. It is said that the setting up of martin-houses is a practice derived from the aborigines of our land.

There is our friend Robin Red-breast running along in the pasture near us. Running, do you call it? Is it a run, a hop, a slide, a spring, or what? You cannot see his feet for swiftness. But a little way at a time does he go, and then with sudden step he brings his head proudly up, and looks this way and that to see who may be near to watch him; and then he is on the alert for some strolling bug or worm that may lay in his way. He is a lively bird, especially when he is after his breakfast or dinner, and really it would be difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins; for breakfast and dinner are welcome at all hours to Robin. Such an appetite as he has, and such an eater as he is! No bird of his size can surpass him in his propensity for devouring. He seems always ready for one more nibble at worm or insect, or at the rich cherries which invite him, on the neighboring tree. Robin is a noted musician. We are all familiar with his song, so full and clear in the early morning time, or "when the weary day is done," and he gladdens the field or garden with his sweet and thrilling tones.

Our American Robin is peculiar in the choice of places for his nest. He builds often near houses and in very noisy locations, and one has been known to fix his nest on the timbers of a railroad bridge, over a wide sheet of water, on which trains were often passing, a dangerous and tremulous position, and one from which it would be difficult to teach the little ones to fly, as a misstep might cause them to fall into the water. The American Robin is nearly twice as large as the English one.

Hark! What is that warbling, richer than the Robin's, but not so prolonged? What a hearty and melodious sound! It is the Golden Oriole,—the "Gold Robin," as he is sometimes called, the perfection of Robin beauty. His garment is an exquisite mixture of black and brown, and brilliant red and gold. He is at home, too, in the orchards and gardens, and everywhere about

the dwellings of men. Do you know where and how he builds his nest? Look out there on that high and far-branching limb of the elm, hanging over the road, and you see suspended one of the queerest and most ingenious little dwellings ever wrought by birds' bills and fingers. And what a variety there is woven into the nest! twig, straw, hair, feather, twine, yarn, and almost every flexible thing that the builder could lay his hands on. Some one tells us of a nest he saw, from which was flying quite a string of wick-yarn stolen from the kitchen of some good farmer's wife in the neighborhood. One end of the yarn had been worked into the bird-house. The oriole is a great stickler for his rights. He guards his nest carefully, and is ready to attack other bird-intruders if they are disposed to annoy him.

We have noted some of the first of the spring and summer birds that greet us in North America. They belong to a great family, who inhabit and enjoy with us this common earthly home which a beneficent Father has given us. He cares for them all; for not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice, and to all these dependents he distributes his bounty. "The eyes of all wait upon Him and He giveth them their meat in due season." Let their sweet voices inspire us to praise that gracious Being whose hand made us and fashioned all things.

Rev. J. G. Adams.

For the Myrtle.

The Bird's Song.

Up in the tree I hang my nest,
Up in the branches high;
Under the leaves I can build it best,
Up so near the sky.

The breezes play with laughter gay
As they go wandering by,
Among the leaflets all the day,
Up so near the sky.

I wake at dawn of the summer morn,
And songs of joy I try;
I can sing them best in my little nest,
Up so near the sky.

And when the sun his course has run,
His parting smile I spy,
And sing good-night with heart so light,
Up so near the sky.

My life is free as a bird's can be,
I envy none, not I!
My dear little home is sweet to me,
Up so near the sky.

Wynie Wilde.

The Clock of Life.

Mr. Rollins took his little son Lewis one day into the hall where stood the old clock. He wished to teach him how to find out at any time the hour of the day or night. Again and again Mr. Rollins repeated his instructions to little Lewis, and was very patient and forbearing with him in the mistakes that he at first made in naming the time. At last to his great joy, Lewis was perfected in his lesson, so that he could tell what o'clock it was almost as well as his father.

"And now, Lewis," said Mr. Rollins, "that you have learned to know the hour by the clock in the hall, I must draw your attention to another clock—the clock of life; I mean the beating of your pulse; for it may often remind you of the value of time, and the necessity of turning it to good account. Time is worth more than the finest gold.

"'My pulse is the clock of my life;
It shows how my moments are flying
It marks the departure of time,
And tells me how fast I am dying.'

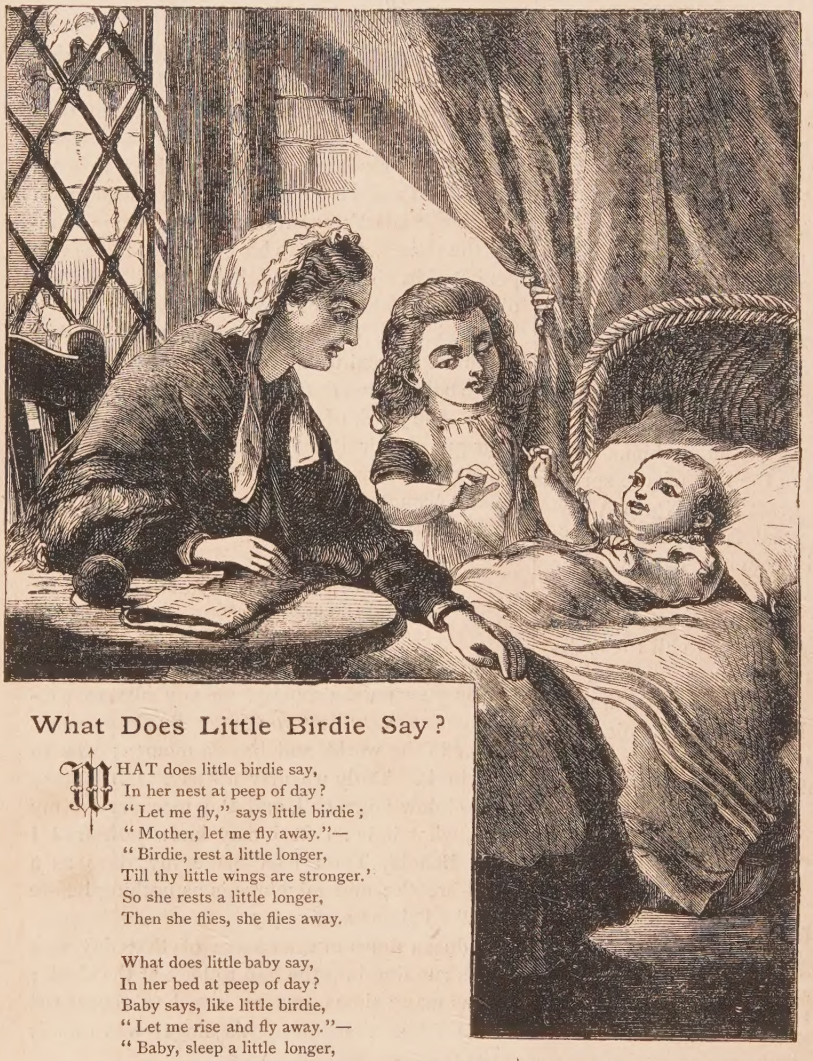
"I will show you how to lay the tip of your finger on your pulse properly, and you must remember that at every beat you have lived a moment longer in the world, and have a moment less to live in it. Truly we may all say, 'Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, Thou hast made my days as a hand-breath; and mine age is as nothing before thee." Pslams xxxix. 4–5.

A dozen times in the course of that day was Lewis running into the hall to look at the clock; and as many times was he heard to repeat the words, while the tip of his finger was on his wrist:

"My pulse is the clock of my life;
It shows how my moments are flying;
It marks the departure of time,
And tells me how fast I am dying."

Things to Remember.

1. Begin and end every day with God; 2. A faithful servant is his master's best friend; 3. Denying a fault doubles it; 4. What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; 5. Save while you are young, that you may have something to spend when you are old; 6. Be clothed with humility, not with finery; 7. What you would nor do before men, fear to think before God.



What Does Little Birdie Say?

WHAT does little birdie say,
In her nest at peep of day?
"Let me fly," says little birdie;
"Mother, let me fly away."—
"Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till thy little wings are stronger.'
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies, she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
"Let me rise and fly away."—
"Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till thy little limbs are stronger."
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby, too, shall fly away.

Tennyson.

The Fisherman's Son.

A gentleman walking on the beach came across a little boy sitting on the road all by himself, looking out on the great ocean.

"You like the sea, my boy, do you not?"

"Yes, sir; and I hope to follow it when I get bigger."

"It is a hard life, besides being dangerous," said the gentleman.

"Yes, sir; but Jesus Christ went to sea, and he knows the dangers; and sometimes he preached from a ship. I am sure he loves sailors," said the boy.

"But that will not hinder you from meeting with storms, and perhaps getting shipwrecked."

"Christ rules the winds and waves. He stopped a storm once."

"He does not now," said the gentleman.

"No, sir; but he will help us to trust in him; and, if we hold on to him, nothing can much harm us," said the boy.

"You might be drowned."

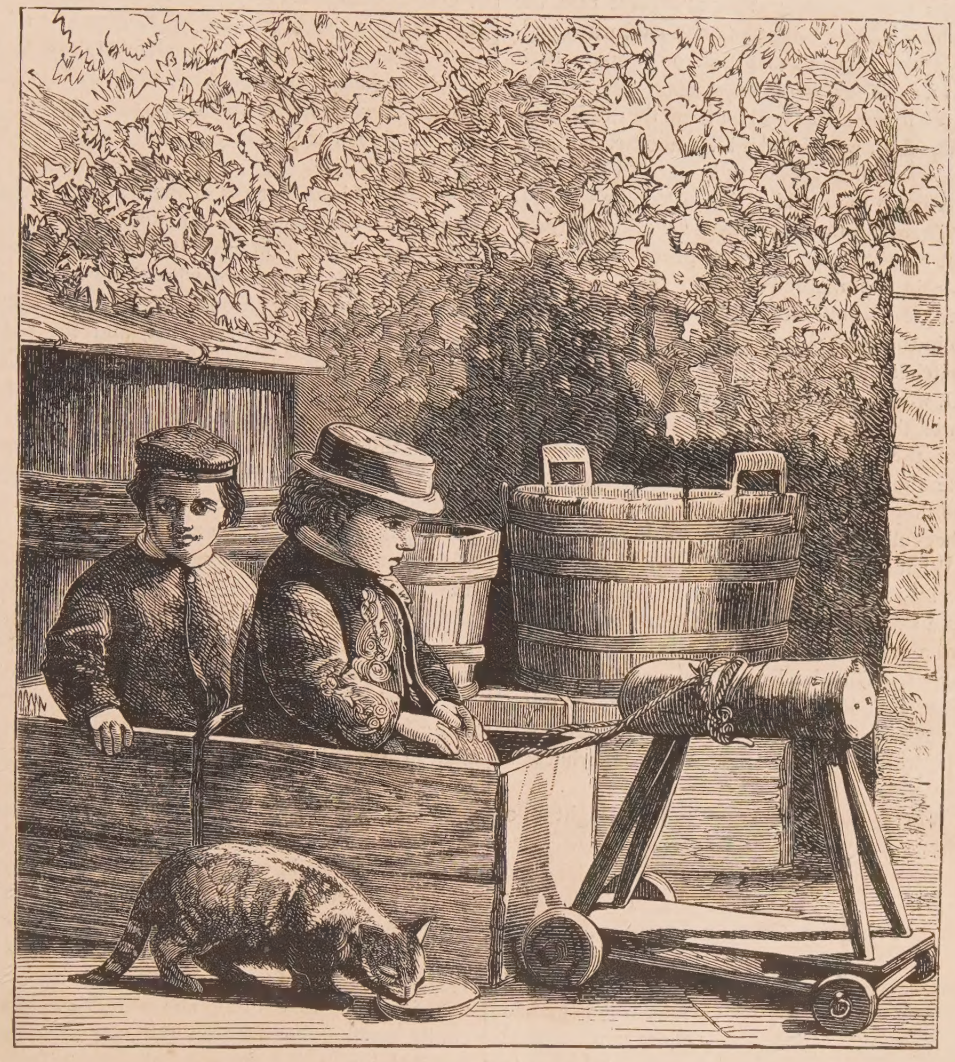
"Yes, sir." The boy stopped. "But, you know, my soul would then fly up to God; and it is all fair weather up there."

"Why, my little man, you are quite a preacher," said the gentleman.

The sweet, quiet, happy face of the little fellow so pleased the gentleman, that he felt he had the best of company.

"WHY, mother, how bright and cheerful you look to-night. What has happened?"

"I feel very happy, my dear, because my little boy has really tried to be good all day. Once when his sister Katie teased him, and he spoke quick and cross to her, he immediately turned of his own account, told her he was wrong, and asked her to forgive him. I believe I should grow young, and never look tired or unhappy any more, if every day my little boy and girl were as thoughtful, and unselfish, and loving, as they have been to-day."



For the Myrtle.

Caught in a Shower.

"COME on, Robbie," said George, "let's take a ride. Here's the old nag waiting."

"That's so," said Robbie, "let's wheel her around here in front of the carriage. Gee up, dobbin!"

The horse was an old saw-horse which had lost its arms, but still stood erect on its four legs. And the carriage was a big trough or bin, which had once been in the sheep-yard.

Hitched together with a piece of clothes-line, these made a very grand team, and Robbie and George drove off with a great flourish. Everybody came to the back windows to see them go.

"Oh, how hot the sun is!" said Robbie. "We must have an umbrella, for I am afraid we shall never get to the shade of a tree."

So he clambered out and went in the back room and found an old blue umbrella with broken ribs and torn covering. Then he climbed back and spread it over himself and George, — very carefully, so as not to scare the horse. Then he put his feet up as high as his head, and sat back and chirruped and clucked to the horse, while George held the reins and put on the whip.

They were jogging along at a great rate, the sun shining down bright as noon-day, when suddenly there came a great dash of rain on their umbrella. They were so startled they nearly dropped it, but it was well for them they didn't, for the first dash was followed by another and another.

"What in the world — " said Robbie.

"Where did that come from ?" said George.

But they sat very still and peered up through a hole in the umbrella. Soon they saw their father stealing out on the platform of his paint-shop in the shed-chamber just over them, with a big pitcher in his hand.

"O, we see you! we've caught you at it!" shouted the boys.

But they spoke a little too late, and what is worse, they veered around their umbrella to look up as they spoke, and so down came the whole pitcher-full of water, splash, over them.

"What's the use of an umbrella unless it rains ?" said their father. But he didn't see what a shower-bath he had given them till he heard a great laughing and shouting from the windows. Then he looked and saw Robbie and George jumping out of their carriage, shaking their hats and their legs, and wringing their coat-skirts, while the horse stood still to see what was to pay.

"Why, I didn't think we'd get caught in a shower,—did you ?" said George.

Tommy Gray's Family.

"WHERE *is* my Tommy Gray ?" said Lizzie, one evening when she had called and called, and looked everywhere in vain. "I want to put him to bed. Have you seen him, Mary ?"

"When I came up from the village," said Mary, "I saw him going across the field toward Mr. Smith's, and hearing his voice pretty loud, I thought he was crying ; but when I listened carefully, I found he was saying : 'Mar-r-i-i-a, I want to come into your ya-a-r-r-r-rd — there's going to be a r-r-r-o-o-ow!' so I guess he has gone over to a party."

Lizzie was very much amused at this, and for a long time would enquire for Maria's health every time her kitten came into the house.

One morning Mary opened the door very early, and there on the piazza sat three cats in a row, first Tommy Gray, then a smaller Maltese cat, which looked half-starved, and lastly a little black-and-white kitten, as frisky and playful as kittens always are. Mary ran to the stairs and called :

"Lizzie, Lizzie, here is Tommy, and he has brought Maria home with him, and a baby!"

It was really so. Maria was so cruelly abused by Mr. Smith's great boys, who threw stones at her and swung her around by her tail, that Tommy concluded to take her and the baby home to live.

Now Maria was far from being handsome. Her body was too large, her legs too small, h r tail too thin, with a queer little crook in the end of it ; one ear had been cut off, and her nose broken, so it was all askew, and taking it all together, she was as funny a looking thing as is often seen. But her disposition was excellent, and Tommy seemed to think a great deal of her, and did not know but she was as handsome as he. The kitten was a wild little thing, savage as a bear, frightened at the least sound, and spry as a squirrel. He bit Lizzie's finger till the blood ran, when she attempted to carry him to a soft bed in the barn, and growled every time she came near.

Mr. May did not want so many cats around, so he put Maria and her kitten in a basket, after a great scramble in catching them, tied the cover down, and carried them back to Mr. Smith's. Lizzie begged hard to have them stay, but her father would not consent, and she went crying to bed ; but when Mary went to the door the next morning, the first thing she saw was Maria coolly washing her face on the steps, the little one dodging behind the wood-pile, while Tommy walked triumphantly back and forth on the piazza. Mr. May did not send them away again.

It was comical to see the fatherly air of Tommy, as he would sit on the piazza or in the barn-door, w tching the gambols of the kitten and its mamma. He would look as dignified as a judge for some time ; then, the desire for a frolic getting the better of his gravity, he would run and jump more than both together.

Tommy sometimes came in for a nap on the lounge, but Maria never entered the house. She would sit on the piazza taking care of the kitten until he came out, then purr and rub by

him in the most affectionate manner, and the kitten would run up and give him a pat on the ear, then dart off to tempt him to a race.

One day Susie Smith came over to see Lizzie, and Maria seemed quite glad to see her, following her around the garden and yard as politely as possible ; but when Susie tried to take her up, she growled very savagely, to show that she was not to be taken to her old home to be abused. Poor Maria ! One morning she was found stretched out on the barn floor, dead, and Tommy Gray was alone. He did not seem to mourn her loss very much, but the kitten was almost inconsolable. She would go under the piazza and mew-mew for an hour at a time, and refused food for two days ; but now has transferred her affection to Tommy. He waits at the door until Tommy comes out, then rubs back and forth against his nose, running before him every step he takes, as if to keep him from going further. He does not grow any tamer. Lizzie is the only one who can get near him, and she can never touch him. He is so very shy, and so quick in his motions that he is named Nimshy Cut-and-run.

One day Nimshy caught a mouse, and such a growling, spitting and scratching as he made was never heard before. At another time Tommy caught a large rat in the field, and brought it home to Nimshy. The rat was so large that, though Tommy held his head as high as he could reach, the rat's feet and tail dragged on the ground, and Tommy had to keep his fore-feet stretched wide apart to avoid stepping on them. He looked very funny waddling up the path, and Nimshy seemed to appreciate his efforts, for he seized the rat and ran off, growling like a little thunderstorm, and not letting Tommy have a single bite.

This chapter was written thus far, and left for several weeks, and during this time Tommy Gray has married a new wife and brought her home. She is Maltese, like him, and very pretty, but Nimshy Cut-and-run did not want to see another in his mother's place, so when Tommy brought the pretty new wife up to be introduced, the young hopeful sprang at her like a wild creature, bit her ears, scratched her eyes, pulled her nose, growled and spit, till the poor thing ran for her life, and has not been seen since. Tommy gave Nimshy a good whipping, but I do not think he will bring home any more step-mothers.

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

How shall we transport all our children bodily into Music Hall, and make them enjoy the great Children's Meeting holden there on Tuesday of Anniversary Week? Although a very hot day, the twelve schools were out in full force at three in the afternoon, and they with their friends filled the floor and first gallery, and overran into the second. After some very spirited singing, they were addressed by Rev. Mr. M'Collester, of N. H., who told them so many stories we could not think of remembering them all, much less repeating them. But we know they were all about the right way lo live, and he told of an epitaph he saw away off in Italy that he wished might be written over every life at its close,—" Here lies one who transported a large fortune to heaven in good works, and has gone thither to enjoy it." He was listened to with great attention by the children.

Then Rev. E. C. Sweetser, of New York, himself not many years from a boy, made them a good, hearty speech from the text, " Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." He took the children themselves for a subject, for he said he " could not have one with more heads—or better ones."

After him came Rev. Henry C. Leonard, who also wrote the children a hymn from the twenty-third Psalm, to which the conductor, Mr. Veazie, wrote a beautiful air, and named it after the young pastor at Chelsea, "Tousey." It began

" Shepherd of the holy hills,
We thy lambs, with tender feet,
Follow Thee beside the rills,
And through pastures fair and sweet."

They also sung one or two new festival songs that were fine and spirited, and altogether the meeting passed off in the most enjoyable manner.

And by the way, we heard a little story about that engine of Mr. Sweetzer's that will show how his talk is bearing fruit. A lady said that the next day after the meeting her little boy, who could not attend, came running home from school to tell her that the boy above him missed and he spelled the word and went above him She seemed to think he was glad Eddie missed the word. She told him she was indeed glad he could spell it, but that it was not right to rejoice because another missed, and told him what Mr. Sweetser said about the engine, and keeping the steam down, and how the strong boy best showed his strength. Frankie was very much interested in the engine, and asked her many questions about what Mr. Sweetser said. The next day he came home, calling out, " Eddie missed again, mother." " And how did you feel about it this time?" she said. " Well, mother," he answered, " *it did boil up a little.*"

HALIFAX, N. S.

The members of the Sunday School in this place report, as the result of a successful Bazaar, the sum of three hundred dollars in gold.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON XLI.

THE HEALING OF THE WOMAN HAVING AN ISSUE OF BLOOD.

"Heal me, O Lord."

SCRIPTURE,—Matt. ix. 20–22; Mark v. 25–34; Luke viii. 43–48.

Question—Who touched the hem of Christ's garment as he was on his way to raise the ruler's daughter?

Answer— Mark v. 25.

Q.—How long had she suffered from her disease?

A. Mark v. 25.

Q. How much of her worldly means had she expended in seeking relief?

A. — Mark v. 26.

Q. — Had she heard of Christ's miracles?

A. — Mark v. 27.

Q. — What did she do?

A. — Mark v. 27.

NOTE. The garment spoken of here was in the form of a shawl and worn like a shawl. Great importance was attached to the hem or fringe of this garment, founded upon the regulation in Numbers. This hem was a fringe composed of the threads of the woof which were left long to prevent the fabric from unravelling. The Jewish word which denoted it, meant *fretted edge*. The corners of the garment were ornamented with a narrow violet ribbon, so narrow that it might be called a thread or string. The Pharisees made it more prominent than it was intended to be, making the fringe wide and drawing into a large number of these narrow violet ribbons. The Pharisees attached great importance to it, as is seen in our lesson, and in Matt. xiv, 36 and xxiii. 5.

Q. — Did the woman regard the fringe of Christ's garment as evidence of remarkable holiness?

A. — Mark v. 28.

Q. — What effect immediately followed when she touched the fringe?

A. — Mark v. 29.

Q. — Did Christ know that his garment had been touched?

A. — Mark v. 30.

Q. — As the multitude has been pressing about him, what reply did the disciples make to his question?

A. — Mark v. 31.

Q. — As Jesus looked around upon the multitude, what did the woman do?

A. — Mark v. 33.

Q. — What encouraging and comforting words did Jesus speak to her?

A. — Mark v. 34.

The multitudes brushed against Jesus, but none of them were especially blessed. This woman came for help. Her touch was not the thoughtless or rude touch of others who thronged about the Saviour. She came in faith, and received the blessing she sought. Let us remember that it is not enough for us to live in a Christian land, where the Bible is found in every home, where we walk in the shadows of Christian churches, and move along their aisles. We must come with a holy purpose and a sense of need to Bible and church and sacraments, and the virtue will go out from them to us, for they are Christ's garments.

Enigma.

I am composed of forty-eight letters.
My 1, 38, 13, 4, 5, 42, 9, 38. was a son of Saul.
My 34, 24, 25, 41, 19, was stoned and buried.
My 44, 31, 46, 8, 18, 45, 48, 24, 25, was a high priest killed by the order of Saul.
My 30, 34, 10, 21, 40, 43, was one whose dancing cost John the Baptist his head.
My 26, 14, 8, 27, 26, 32, 40, 3, 30, was a queen who tended Babylon.
My 6, 7, 17, 22, 12, was a youth who slew a giant.
My 11, 16, 47, 22, was a son of Jacob.
My 2, 9, 36, 1, 15, 22, 23, was a sultan of the East.
My 29, 39, 33, 37, is to inform.
My whole is a passage of Scripture.

Answers.

June 10. Judges ix. 53, 54. Abimelech. Millstone.

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